

THE
DEATH OF ARTHO.

AND THE
DEATH OF FRAOCH.

T W O
ANCIENT POEMS,

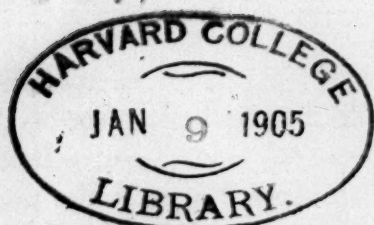
TRANSLATED FROM
THE GALIC.

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T H E
P R I N T E R S.

THE elevation of sentiment and expression, the bold and animated description, the magnanimous bravery, the humane, tender, and generous sentiments, found in the poems of OSSIAN, astonished the public, and delighted many. But, as the opinions of mankind are rarely unanimous on any subject, the very excellence observed in them made some gentlemen doubt, not only of their antiquity, but even imagine that they were not translated from the Galic language at all; as if it were so easy a matter to seize so strong an idea of manners that have disappeared for ages; while so few pictures of the life, continually before us, are found of equal strength and sublimity. It would be unreasonable to expect that copiousness of language which depends on the advancement of arts and sciences, or that their images should be drawn from objects with which they were altogether unacquainted. We ought rather to admire that they have been able to adorn their poems so nobly with that grand and wild nature with which they were familiar. In OSSIAN, all is

nature and genius. 'The light of the song,
in his own language, was his only learning;
to foreign arts and literature a stranger.

The want of variety is indeed a defect
which may displease and pall the unreasonable,
who seek that perfection which is rarely
or never found; but the sublime pleases and
strikes, at every review. On this account, the
Printers received with great pleasure, the fol-
lowing Poems, inclosed in a letter that gives
them ground to hope for more: the words of
which are as follow.

'The inclosed is a translation of two Galic
'Poems. If you think these worth publish-
'ing, many more might be got, and perhaps
'of far greater merit.'

We hereby invite the Gentleman to per-
form his promise; and we shall not only pu-
blish them, but do what may be proper to en-
courage the Translator.

THE
DEATH
OF
ARTHUR.
A POEM.

SAD are my thoughts while alone; thy memory beams on my soul, Calmar, chief of heroes! Thou wast the delight of thy friends in peace, the terror of thy foes in war. My son rushed to battle, and the foes sunk under his founding steel. He returned in his renown, and the heart of the aged rejoiced, and blessed the mighty in battle.—But now my hero is no more, and my joy is for ever gone; grief dwells in the house

A

2 THE DEATH

of thy father, O Calmar, for thy presence brightened his soul; thou wast a sun that shone in his halls, 'till Fuardo came, like the gloomy storm that covers the sun of the morning, and intercepts the cheerful light from mortal men. He came, and darkness dwells in Ard-dlia. And who now is my delight but Artho; Artho alone remains of my race. Thou too, my son, art brave, but thy arm of youth may fail; thy father cannot wield the spear, to defend thee in the first of thy battles. Once could Ardar lift the spear in battle; but now the burden of age trembles on my feeble arm. O that I could see thee return in thy renown, then should my heart rejoice.

But who comes, in the beauty of youth, with his fair locks waving in the breeze, and stately as the oak of the mountain? he is of the race of Arman, from the battle he comes.

Hail, thou beam of youth; whence are thy wandering steps? art thou from the battle of heroes? Say, does Artho live, does he return to his gray-haired father, bright in his glittering steel? — But why should I ask? thy mournful looks tell he is low.--- Artho is then no more.--Soon didst thou leave me, Artho.---Shall I see thee no more, my son!---- Calmar too is departed.---Alone I am left, ---as a blasted oak upon Malmor, I linger out the short dark evening of my life, without a son to

4 THE DEATH

cheer my soul.---Few shall be my days ; soon shall I see you, my children.---The voice of ghosts is heard in the breeze ; it warns me of my departure. --- Few shall be my days on Ardlia.

But say, son of youth, how fell my hero, was his arm strong in battle, did he fall in renown?

“ Without the fame of deeds of might he did not fall. As the bursting thunder of heaven lays low a thousand stately oaks, and shrinks back into his cloud again, --so fought, so fell the hero. Many were the deaths of thy sword, Artho, ere thou didst fall ;---as the flashing fire of night rushes thro’ an hundred groves, such was the lightning of thy steel, amidst thy falling foes, Artho of the noble

deeds. The foes were troubled before the chief; they fled, they fell. Death from Artho's steel crushed them in their fall, as when a rock swift-rolling from the top of Malmor, crushes the trees in its way, as it rolls along; 'till at length it sinks in the lake below. — Such were thy deeds, son of fame. — But the arrow of death came in the blast, and the people are sad, for mighty was he that is low."

Pleasant to me is thy tale, son of Arman; it is as the beams of the sun that dispel the dark clouds of night. Thou hast fought like thy fathers in their battles of youth, Artho, thy name shall be in the song, and bards unborn shall praise thy deeds. The valiant often fall, but always they fall

6 THE DEATH

with fame.---But the feeble die, and are remembered no more; their friends are beheld with disdain, they are ashamed to appear in the presence of mighty men.

But, son of Arman, why that sigh, why these wandering looks? ---Hast thou lost a brother of love, or is thy soul troubled for thy fair spouse of youth, who perhaps is longing for thy return,--or what else grieves thy soul?

“Nor have I lost a brother of love, nor have I a spouse that longs for my return: my sighs are for the fair of Carnmor,---for her my wandering looks. My thoughts are of her in the day,—of her are my dreams in the night.---But her soul is full of Artho; she saw the youth move to

battle, and her heart was troubled; she came to that hill, and followed him with her looks; upon that high rock she sat, waiting for his return.---I am come to meet her, who is the light of my soul, but find her not; my soul is grieved for thee, O Caolval, first of maids.---But who comes from Malmor with disordered steps?---it is she--it is my love--but ah! how changed! pale is her cheek, and wild her look; confusion is in her face; she has heard that her beloved is low.---But hark---she speaks---

CAOLV. What detains thee, O Artho, ere now thou didst promise to return.----Ill-boding thoughts distract my soul; should Artho fail, can I survive! What detains

8 THE DEATH

thee my beloved? — But who is it I see? --- It is the son of Arman. -- Vex me not, O Farno, I love thee not, --- thou art returned from battle, --- but where is Artho? Will he return no more? --- Is my beloved fallen in the strife of steel? --- Yes --- he is fallen, for I see his faint form ascending in a cloud of mist. --- Ah, my beloved, why am I left behind! O that I had fallen with thee! --- But can Caolval live, fairest youth, and thou laid low? --- No --- I will not, I cannot live. --- Where thou art, there too shall Caolval be, O Artho of loves. — Adieu, ye hills and rugged rocks of Carnmor. --- Adieu, ye mossy towers of Ardlia, where dwelt my lovely Artho. — farewel ye woods and streams. --- farewel ye

dark-brown deer; no more shall my piercing darts disturb your rest.---Artho is gone, can I remain behind!

FARNO. Ah! she falls,--she faints, ---she dies away.---- And art thou gone, fairest of maids!---In thee alone did my soul delight, though thy heart was fixed on Artho.---- Thou art gone, and what charms has life to me?--No.---Farewel to all the joys of youth; farewel to all the delights of life.---Caolval is gone, and pleasure is no more to me.---I rush back to the field of death, and open my breast to the steel of some feeble foe:---then Caolval shall I see again.

ARDAR. Blessed be ye, children of youth; lovely were your souls ---why so soon departed?--Happy

10 THE DEATH OF ARTHO.

the young that die in the days of their joy;—they feel not the burden of years, nor see the days of trouble, when the years slowly roll along.—Slow rolls the tide of years to me, O my fathers!—Why am not I received into your halls? Why should I behold the mossy towers of Ardlia, after my race has failed?—Come, ye fathers of Ardar, and carry me to your halls, to Artho and Calmar, the sons of my love.—They come, I hear their feeble voice in the breeze, bidding Ardar come.—I come, ye ghosts of the departed, where Artho and Calmar I shall see again.—Sad and alone I shall be no more.

THE
DEATH
OF
FRAOCH.
A POEM.

MY grief awakens at thy sight,
O lake of Luano! within
thy wave-surrounded isle, my hero
sleeps in his dark and narrow bed;
---dark and lonely is thy dwell-
ing, in thine own green-headed
isle, O Fraoch, chief of heroes,
love of the maids from Cruachan.
---Thy memory dwells in my soul.
---My tears for ever flow.

In that green isle thou seest a
tall tree, whose branches bend be-
neath a load of shining fruit;—

12 THE DEATH

fruit that heals the wounds of death, and lengthens the days of life. — But, alas ! at the root the monstrous serpent lurks ; and what hero dares approach the envenomed foe.

Dangerous sickness seized Mego, daughter of Meoch of the generous shells ; her soul was full of Fraoch,---but the youth loved her not, for Canagal was his delight ; — therefore rage and revenge in Mego's bosom boiled :--- she sent for the valiant Fraoch. The hero came, tall in the beauty of youth, mild and calm, as when the sun hides his face behind the hills of Lorna.—He enquired of the maid what she would. — Health, she replied, I'll ne'er enjoy, without a handful of that fair

fruit in yonder isle, pulled by no hand but thine, O Fraoch.

Undauntedly the hero went, who never dreaded a foe; the wave-encircled isle he reached, and plucked of the fair fruit for Mego. By the sleeping monster unobserved, homewards he safely came, and gave the fruit to the white-bosomed daughter of Meoch. Secretly the maid admired the deed, but the rage of her unrelenting bosom burned, to see her design thus disappointed.---Never, never, O Fraoch, she said, shall I be whole, 'till thou bring me a branch of that tall tree, torn from the trunk.---Why should Fraoch decline danger? Away he strode in his might, to swim once more the waves of Luano.---The tree he

14 THE DEATH

reached, a branch he seized, and struggling tore it from the trunk. --- Long does success attend the brave; --- but who can escape his fated death? --- Just as Fraoch was leaving the green-headed isle, the fell monster being roused, pursued and seized the ill-fated youth, and, fight of woes! tore asunder his white and manly limbs. --- The unhappy Canagal, fairest of maids, from the distant shore, beheld her lover's dismal fate. --- Silent and breathless, on the shore, a cloud of mist, she fell. --- Their souls were one, and could the maid survive her lover.

I saw the dark scene of your departure, fair children of youth ; my soul was sad for my friends, and cursed the cruel author of my

woe.---Curfed be that Mego, that ruined the fair-haired, white-bomed Canagal, that laid the fnare of death for Fraoch. --- * Friend- fhip dwelt in thy heart, O Fraoch, thy foul was a beam of light from heaven;---graceful and lovely was

* What follows is inimitably beautiful in the original.

'S ionmhuin beul nach diult ri daimh,
'S ga'm bi na mnai a deirbheirt phòg :
'S ionmhuin Fraoch a' measg an t sluagh,
'S ionmhuin gruaidh fa'n deirge ròs :
Maifhe 's caifh' a bhi na fhalt,
'S duithe na 'm fitheach bar-fhuilt Fhraoich,
'S guirme na 'n ròs eir'idh a leachd,
Is gile na blar-fìogh' a dheud ;
Is leath a cholg na clàr a luing',
'S leatha na gach comhladh a Sgiath,
'S iomad Triath a thig r'a druim.
'S mine na gach cothar fruth,
'S gile na 'n sneachda corp Fhraoich ;
Snathaiche coi-meao do Fhraoch
Cha do chìn a thasbh ri ftruth.
'S faidde dhuit a fhleagh na crann-fuìl,
'S binne na teud-chiùil a ghuth. —————

16 THE DEATH OF FRAOCH.

thy mien, lovely thy rose-red
cheek; sweeter than the harp thy
voice; blacker than the raven's
wing thy hair of comeliness;----
broader than a gate of brass, thy
shield;--longer than a tall tree thy
spear; around it gathered many
a hero: --- smoother than the o-
cean's foam, whiter than the
new-fallen snow, thy skin;----a
swimmer equal to Fraoch, never
stretched his side to stream.---But
ah! why didst thou not fall in
the strife of heroes, pierced by the
steel of some mighty chief; now
would thy renown be great, and
thy memory for ever last.--Plea-
sant is thy memory to me, O Fra-
och, my tears for ever flow.

F I N I S.